

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4951

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TAGS: CI, PINS, SHUM, SREF

SUBJ: POLITICAL DETAINEES

REF: (A) STATE 228929; (B) SANTIAGO 6121; (C) SANTIAGO 5084

1. FIGURES OF DETAINEES AS OF AUGUST 30 GIVEN BY AMBASSADOR TRUCCO APPEAR TO BE SAME AS THOSE ANNOUNCED BY INTERIOR MINISTER BENAVIDES JULY 15 (REF C), THOSE UNDER STATE OF SIEGE AS OF SEPTEMBER 17 ARE SAME, MINUS 95 PERSONS RELEASED TO PANAMA (REF B) AND FEW OTHERS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN RELEASED IN CHILE OR EXILED.

2. TO RECAPITULATE FIGURES AS OF AUGUST 30 AND JULY 15: SOME 653 PERSONS WERE HELD WITHOUT CHARGE UNDER STATE OF SIEGE AUTHORITY (CATEGORY I). OF THESE, 308 HAD EXILE DECREES AND WERE AWAITING ACCEPTANCE BY FOREIGN COUNTRY AND REMAINING 345 HAD NOT BEEN ISSUED EXPULSION DECREES. THERE WERE 1,393 PERSONS AWAITING TRIAL BEFORE MILITARY TRIBUNALS (CATEGORY II), AND 2,117 CONVICTED AND SERVING SENTENCES (CATEGORY III).

3. COMMENT: TRUCCO SAID 209 WITH EXILE DECREES AS OF SEPT 17 STILL AWAITED ACCEPTANCE BY FOREIGN COUNTRY. WE CANNOT CONFIRM THIS FIGURE, BUT IT APPEARS TO REFLECT 95 PERSONS SENT TO PANAMA. MOST OF CASES REFERRED TO EMBASSY BY ICEM FOR PAROLE

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PROGRAM, AND THOSE RECOMMENDED TO DEPARTMENT, HAVE COME FROM

THIS CATEGORY. REST, OF COURSE, ARE CATEGORY III CASES.

4. MOST OF REMAINING PERSONS IN CATEGORY I (345 AS OF JULY 15/AUG 30; PROBABLY 338 AS OF SEPT 17) WILL PRESUMABLY BE HELD INDEFINITELY WITHOUT TRIAL UNDER STATE OF SIEGE AUTHORITY. GOC SPOKESMEN HAVE SAID FOR MANY MONTHS THAT HARD CORE OF DETAINEES WHO ARE "TOO DANGEROUS TO RELEASE" WOULD REMAIN AFTER OVERALL DETAINEE RELEASE PROGRAM HAD BEEN COMPLETED. USUAL FIGURE GIVEN IS BETWEEN 200 AND 300.

5. EMBASSY HAS NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE AS TO WHO THESE PEOPLE ARE OR WHAT THEIR POLITICAL BACKGROUND IS, BUT WE SUSPECT THAT WELL OVER HALF ARE PROBABLY HARD CORE MEMBERS OF EXTREMIST MOVEMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (MIR), PLUS SMALL NUMBER OF OTHER EXTREME LEFTISTS WHO ALSO BELIEVE IN TERRORISM AND ARMED VIOLENCE. NEXT LARGEST SINGLE GROUP IS PROBABLY LEFT-WING SOCIALISTS (PS) WHO ALSO GENERALLY BELIEVE IN "REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE." REMAINDER MAY BE MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTION OF PERSONS FROM OTHER PARTIES OF ALLENDE'S POPULAR UNITY COALITION, SOME HELD FOR THEIR POLITICAL IMPORTANCE IN, FOR EXAMPLE, TRADE UNION FIELD OR COMMUNIST PARTY, AND OTHERS FOR THEIR PROCLIVITIES FOR VIOLENCE. CATEGORY INCLUDES THE FEW SENIOR MEMBERS OF ALLENDE COALITION (DAWSON ISLAND/RITOQUE GROUP) STILL DETAINED. IN SUM, THIS HARD CORE PROBABLY CONSISTS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY OF PERSONS PRONE TO VIOLENCE, OR DETERMINED ENEMIES OF REGIME WHO WOULD ATTEMPT TO SUBVERT IT IF THEY COULD.
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